

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-66. (Canceled)

67. (Currently amended) A mold for producing ~~[[an]]~~ a molded optical component, comprising:

- a first resin flow path having a first cross sectional area;
- a second resin flow path having a second cross sectional area smaller than the first cross sectional area in a resin flow direction, the second resin flow path which
~~locates in continuation being continuously connected~~ to the first resin flow path in ~~[[a]]~~
the resin flow direction and has a second cross section area smaller than the first cross sectional area; and
- an optical functional section forming section having a third cross sectional area smaller than the first cross sectional area in the resin flow direction and larger than the first and second cross sectional areas perpendicular to the resin flow direction, the optical functional section forming section which
~~locates in continuation being continuously connected~~ to the second resin flow path in ~~[[a]]~~ the resin flow direction;

wherein the molded optical component comprises:

- a supporting shaft section corresponding to the first resin flow path~~[[.]]~~;
- a connecting section corresponding to the second resin flow path₁; and

an optical functional section corresponding to the optical functional section forming section, and
wherein the third cross sectional area corresponds to a largest diameter of the optical functional section.

68. (Currently amended) ~~[[the]]~~ The mold of claim 67, wherein the first resin flow path is shaped to have a portion ~~[[to]]~~ form a three-dimensional distinguishing mark on the supporting shaft section.

69. (Currently amended) The mold of claim 67, wherein ~~a flow direction of a resin~~ the resin flow direction through the first resin flow path and the second resin flow path is ~~almost~~ substantially a straight line.

70. (Currently amended) The mold of claim 67, wherein ~~a flow direction of a resin~~ the resin flow direction on the first resin flow path conforms with that on the second resin flow path and is ~~almost~~ substantially a straight line.

71. (Currently amended) The mold of claim 67, wherein ~~a flow direction of a resin~~ the resin flow direction on the first resin flow path is perpendicular to ~~that on the~~ second resin flow path.

72. (Original) The mold of claim 67, wherein the first resin flow path is a runner.

73. (Original) The mold of claim 67, wherein the first resin flow path is a gate.

74. (Currently amended) The mold of claim 67, wherein the first resin flow path is shaped ~~such that~~ to form ~~the cross-sectional form of the~~ supporting shaft section ~~becomes almost a circle~~ having a substantially circular cross section.

75. (Currently amended) The mold of claim 67, wherein the first resin flow path is shaped ~~such that~~ to form ~~the cross-sectional form of the~~ supporting shaft section ~~becomes almost a trapezoid~~ having a substantially trapezoidal cross section.

76. (Currently amended) The mold of claim 67, wherein the first resin flow path is shaped ~~such that~~ to form ~~the cross-sectional form of the~~ supporting shaft section ~~becomes almost a semicircle~~ having a substantially semi-circular cross section.

77. (Currently amended) The mold of claim ~~[[67]]~~ 76, wherein the first resin flow path and the optical component forming section are shaped such that a normal line on a chord section of the semicircle ~~almost agrees~~ substantially coincides with an optical axis on an optical functional surface of the optical functional section.

78. (Currently amended) The mold of claim 67, wherein the first resin flow path is shaped ~~such that~~ to form a protruded portion ~~is formed~~ on the supporting shaft section.

79. (Currently amended) The mold of claim 67, wherein the first resin flow path is shaped ~~such that~~ to form a concave portion ~~is formed~~ on the supporting shaft section.

80. (Currently amended) The mold of claim 67, wherein the second resin flow path is shaped ~~such that~~ to form a stress-concentration portion ~~is formed~~ on the connecting section.

81. (Currently amended) A method of molding ~~[[an]]~~ the optical component with ~~[[a]]~~ the mold described in claim 67.

82. (Withdrawn) A method of molding an optical component with a mold having plural gates for a cavity corresponding to the optical component, comprising:
filling resin into the cavity through the plural gates, wherein a timing to start filling the resin is different for each of the plural gates.

83-90. (Canceled)